

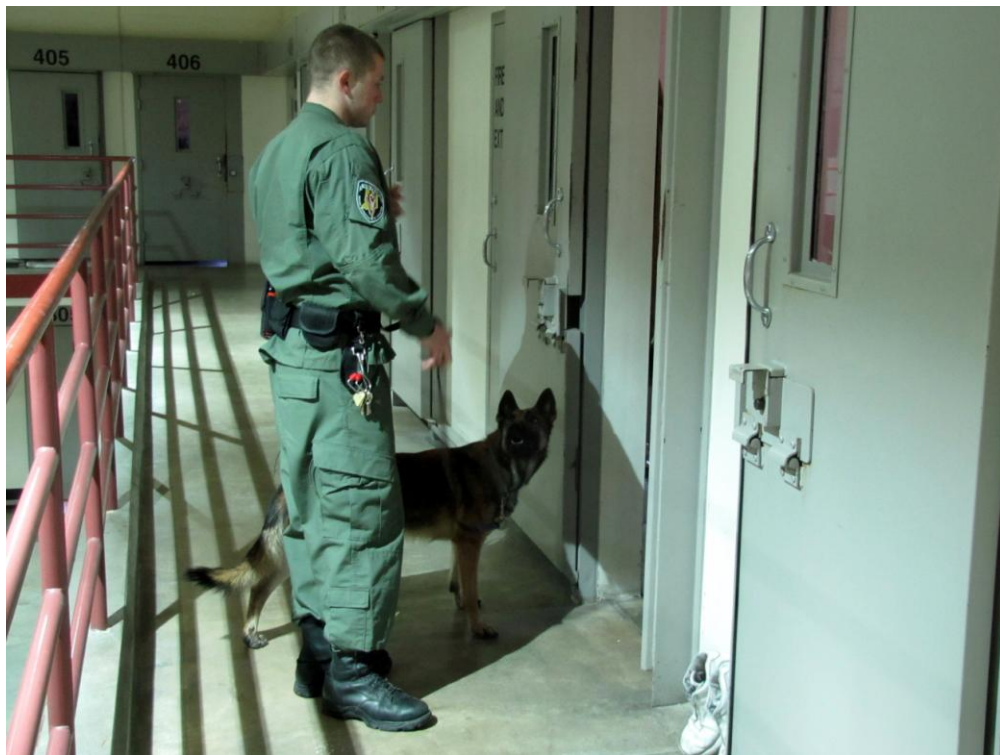


*For immediate release*

## New Program Keeps Cell Phones Out of the Hands of Inmates

Indianapolis, IN (December 30, 2013) – The Indiana Department of Correction is proud to announce a new program aimed at combating cell phone trafficking in Indiana’s prisons. The Cell Phone Detection K-9 Program has successfully completed its pilot phase, training two cell-phone-sniffing dogs at the Pendleton Correctional Facility and Wabash Valley Correctional Facility.

Cell phones are among the biggest challenges prison officials face today, and cell phone detection K-9s are the latest tool for sniffing out the problem. “In the hands of offenders, cell phones not only threaten the safety and security of our facilities, but can also pose a serious threat to the public,” stated IDOC Commissioner Bruce Lemmon. “In many cases, offenders use them to circumvent prison phone monitoring systems, oftentimes to run criminal operations on the outside, plan escapes, facilitate acts of violence inside and outside of prison, communicate with gang associates, or traffic drugs and other contraband into our facilities.”



*Officer Jarod Collenbaugh and K-9 Dixie search a housing unit at the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility*

The Cell Phone Detection K-9 program pilot began in September 2013 with an intensive eight week training course developed by IDOC’s Emergency Operations Division, based off a similar program implemented by the GEO Group at the New Castle Correctional Facility. The training program began with basic fundamental detection work and handler skills, including obedience and socialization, then

progressed to real working conditions. The handler and K-9 are trained in personnel searches, vehicle searches, area searches, and property searches.

Commissioner Lemmon added, "This issue has plagued states across the country, and the K-9 detection program has proven to be a cost effective solution to fighting the serious issue of illegal cell phones in prison."

In 2012, 2560 cell phones were confiscated inside Indiana's 20 adult correctional facilities. Monthly sweeps in cells around Indiana turn up anywhere from 50 to 60 cell phones. So far this year, the Department has seized over 1000 phones, which are often smuggled in by visitors or staff and can be sold for as much as \$1200 on the inside.

The handlers and dogs were hand selected by the pilot facilities. Wabash Valley chose Officer Jarod Collenbaugh and K-9 Dixie, and Pendleton chose Officer Brantley Ferguson and K-9 Port. All IDOC K-9s are donated to the Department and training costs are minimal training costs. The IDOC has future plans to implement this program statewide, placing a Cell Phone Detection K-9 in every IDOC facility.

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